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LANGLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 12, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Jacob Labovitz of Langley High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Labovitz is the first Gatorade Virginia Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Langley High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Labovitz as Virginia's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Labovitz joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 6-foot-3, 190-pound senior forward had led the Saxons to a 17-1-2 record and a berth in the Group 6A state semifinals at the time of his selection. Labovitz had scored 42 goals and passed for 12 assists through 20 games. He scored more than two goals in 15 games and tallied seven goals and three assists in Langley's four-game run to the Group 6A North Region title. Labovitz spent his junior year and the first semester of his senior year playing and training in Europe.

He has volunteered locally at an animal shelter, and he has spent time in North Carolina organizing, collecting and supplying donations to various dog rescue shelters. "Jacob is the best pure goal scorer I've seen in high school soccer," said Josh Harris, head coach of West Springfield High School. "He is strong, fast and strikes a ball exceptionally well. The fire and passion he brings to the field is why he succeeds."

Labovitz has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Farleigh Dickinson University beginning this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Labovitz joins recent Gatorade Virginia Boys Soccer Players of the Year Lucas Mendes (2015-16, Washington-Lee High School), Marcel Berry (2014-15, Albemarle High School), Peter Pearson (2013-14, Cape Henry Collegiate School), Suli Dainkeh (2012-13, South Lakes High School), Todd Wharton (2011-12, Deep Run High School), Luis Rendon (2010-11, Cosby High School), Ryan Zinkhan (2009-10, Riverbend High School), Will Bates (2008-09, Thomas Dale High School), Christian McLaughlin (2007-08, Herndon High School), and Uche Onyeador (2006-07, Potomac Falls High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jacob will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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